

# Press-Herald

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## Two Welcome Candidates

Two of Los Angeles County's most popular public officials have declared their intentions to seek re-election to the posts they have been filling so ably.

First to announce was County Assessor Philip E. Watson who has compiled a commendable record of efficient service in the demanding field of assessing property for ad valorem taxes. While waves of scandal rolled over the operations of assessment offices from San Francisco to San Diego, not a hint has been raised about Los Angeles County's offices under the able direction of Mr. Watson.

Establishing a similar record in a terribly demanding field has been Sheriff Peter J. Pitchess, who has announced that he will seek a new term as head of Los Angeles County's internationally recognized sheriff's office. Some hint of the stature of Sheriff Pitchess is contained in the naming of his two principal campaign aides — former sheriff Eugene Biscailuz and Walt Disney.

Both men have done yeoman's service for Los Angeles County and for all Californians and we are happy to see men of their recognized ability seeking these important offices.

### Others Say:

#### Feeling the Pinch

There has been an unhappy consistency in the government's cost of living reports which appear each month. The recent trend — after a longer period of comparative stability — has been steadily upward. And many informed observers think that this trend will not only continue but will be accelerated.

Consumers everywhere are feeling the pinch, and most particularly those consumers of modest means who have no way of increasing their incomes to offset higher costs. They are, naturally, seeking a scapegoat — a place to put the blame. And, human nature being what it is, numbers of them put it on the retailer. For the retail store is where they buy their foods and goods, and it is there that they see the pennies and the dimes and the dollars added to the price tags.

But the fact is that the retailer is also a victim of inflation — not its creator. He, too, is caught in the wage-price spiral. He can do nothing about the huge and rising government deficits which are a major force behind any inflationary trend. And it is idle and mistaken to argue that he can prevent or slow inflation by using a part of his profits to absorb the price increases. The margin of profit in modern mass-merchandising is so small that if it didn't exist at all the consumer would barely be able to notice the difference. The major food chains, for instance, commonly operate on a profit margin of little more than a single cent on each dollar of sales. Other kinds of stores earn, after the bills are paid, only three cents or so. They have no choice — they must pass the increases on to the buyer if they are to remain in business.

If inflation continues, the public at large should make a real effort to learn where the blame belongs — and not place it on the innocent.

—Industrial News Review.

Studies of the largest corporations and labor specialists prove that the worker who takes two vacations a year is more efficient in his work than those who get a break only once a year. The vacation in the winter need not be an expensive one. The idea is to get a break, or a rest. Reading this, you are probably agreeing with the conclusion. But will you do anything about it? Make your plans now, if possible, to enjoy a break from the grind this winter. —Heflin (Ala.) News.

Doctors today are so loaded with cases that they are forced to limit their response to calls. If anybody has an idea that the situation is bad today, wait until medicare gets under way. Every hypochondriac in the country (eligible for assistance under the new medicare legislation) will be insisting that he's sick, must have attention that the government says he is entitled to, must get it and the government will pay for it. —Gilbertville (N.Y.) Bee-Journal-Chronicle.

The Internal Revenue Service celebrated its 100th anniversary not too long ago. Tax officials noted that no one sent them best wishes for many happy returns. —Spauling (Neb.) Enterprise.

The Small Business Administration has been authorized to make "Economic Injury Disaster Loans" to small business concerns located in Lancaster County from now until Nov. 30, 1966. This is federal money, of course. Real money is a little harder to come by. —Lancaster (S.C.) News

## Morning Report:

It seems to me that the Prime Minister of South Africa has put God on the spot. The country is suffering from a severe drought and the other day Dr. Hendrick Verwoerd asked the people to pray for rain.

The assumption is, of course, that only white people will pray because the government never asks the black people to do anything. It orders them. Also, the churches co-operating in the pray-in are exclusively for whites.

So, if God answers the white prayers, he will have to provide rain to non-praying black farmers as well. After all, the old principle that the rain falls on the just and unjust alike must also, by extension, apply to both races.

Abe Mellinkoff



### Report to the People

## Overworked Grand Jury Needs Help, D.A. Says

By EVELLE J. YOUNGER

District Attorney "We express our gratitude," declared the 1965 Grand Jury, "for the opportunity to have served, and we pass along to the incoming 1966 Grand Jury our compliment and best wishes."

It was a gallant statement from a gallant group of men and women, but in a sense it was incomplete. Perhaps it should have contained sympathies too.

Few people realize how hard these people toiled. There is so much for a Grand Jury to do in Los Angeles County that maybe there should be two of them. Maybe it is time to ask for the large effort needed to make the change.

Things were different in other days. When California established its Grand Jury system in 1849, there were only about 3,500 people in Los Angeles County. The first governor, Peter D. Burnett, polled a statewide vote of 6,716. In those times nobody had ever heard of organized crime, and any citizen with a few free afternoons could see pretty well what all the local officials were up to.

Now there are nearly 50,000 people working for this county's government. It has more than 50 departments and districts. The District Attorney is responsible for the prosecution of over 100,000 criminal cases a year. The nearly seven million persons who live here give Los Angeles County a larger population than any other in the United States.

What does all this imply for the Grand Jury? Its function has sometimes been described as "watchdog for the public," which means it is expected to look with a quizzical eye into the way all county departments and institutions are run. It must check the county's books and write a report on its findings running to several hundred pages. It is required to inspect juvenile facilities and adult jails, fire fighting equipment and drunk farms, work camps and hospitals. It considers whether some county officials are getting too much pay or too little. And be-

sides all that, it is called upon to hear evidence in certain criminal cases to determine whether prosecution is in order.

It seems plain that there is just too much for any single body of 23 men and women to do. True, we would apparently have to amend the law to change things, but wisdom suggests that two Grand Juries could do the job better.

Then one could deal with the watchdog duties and the other with crime.

In the last Monthly Report there were some observations about our growing contingent of highly capable Spanish-speaking employees, and pretty soon we were getting queries about Negro personnel.

The answer is yes. They are here, and they are among the most valuable in the office.

Charles E. Windsor, for instance, is head administrative services, the department's most important non-legal position. Gilbert C. Alston, Robert A. Burnett, and Marion Obera have all moved up to Grade II deputy district attorney. Ethel Franklin recently became chief of records in our Bureau of Investigation. John W. DeVoe is one of our most respected detectives; Elizabeth Means our personnel assistant; Ione La Cour our payroll clerk; Louis Swayne, our photographer; Joe L. Brown and Reynard Cummins, Grade II investigators. The list runs on — 25 intermediate typist clerks, four process servers, three legal statement reporters, and others — but space in this report is running out. It would be nice to publish all the names. But by now the point is surely plain.

Our department assumed the roll of educator Thursday and Friday for District Attorneys and many of their deputies from all over California. The occasion was an institute at the Statler Hilton Hotel.

The objective was to build, by a sort of crash process, knowledge of new developments in the constantly changing field of criminal prosecution. Eleven of our top people were among the speakers.

Among the approximately 1,500 defendants who once faced prosecution by our department on charges growing out of the Los Angeles riots, only about 100 still await trial. There are, in fact, fewer than 70 cases pending, and in almost all instances the delays were sought by the defense.

We hoped to clean the slate before March. We still hope so.

Nobody in the District Attorney's office can remember when — if ever — the entire staff of the department met at one time and place, but it's going to happen. There will be an annual meeting of our more than 600 employees from 7 to 9 p.m., Feb. 28 in the Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room.

It is a get-acquainted function. The objective is for all employees to come to know the members of the executive staff and what they are trying to accomplish. The briefing session will last an hour. After that we'll meet informally over refreshments.

### My Neighbors

Prescriptions



### WILLIAM HOGAN

## 'Stronghold' Most Unread Good Novel of the Year

"The Stronghold," 12th novel by Meyer Levin ("Compulsion") was published last October and for some reason remains the most unread good novel of the winter.

Basically it is a thriller of ideas played in a mountain castle in Germany where a famous group of political prisoners is held during the last days of the war. When the book appeared a review noted that it "explores the monumental moral question of our time with all the unbearable tension and suspense of a superb mystery." Yet "The Stronghold" has escaped major bestseller lists so far. Why?

People have the mistaken idea that it is another concentration camp story, the rugged 60-year-old author said during a visit here the other day. Actually, "The Stronghold" has nothing to do with concentration camps. It is based on an incident Levin witnessed on the last day of the war when he accompanied an Allied unit racing into the German redoubt to rescue ex-leaders

### HERB CAEN SAYS:

## Sports Scoop: Giants on The Prowl for the 49ers

THE GIANTS are dying for the 49ers to move from Kezar Stadium to Candlestick Park, hoping thereby to gain some sorely needed improvements to the stands and facilities. . . . Among the very few U. S. citizens who are given passports presumably valid for ANY country in the world are the astronauts. In case they drop into Red China or some other off-limits country—but what do they do for visas? . . . Adman Howard Gossage to Jessica Mitford Treuhaff: "If I meet the Duchess of Westminster, how do I address her?" Jessica: "The same way you address a dog if the dog happens to be named Duchess." . . . Ever hear of "Scotchbread"? Probably not, unless you have a son or friend in Viet Nam. It's against regulations to send them booze. The No. 1 request, so our more ingenious people hollow out a loaf of bread, stash the Scotch inside, and mail it off labeled "Food." Which it certainly is.

MISCHA ELMAN, granddaddy of the concert fiddlers, was here to celebrate his 75th birthday with his daughter. . . . Pianist Erroll Garner opened the other night at Basin Street West—but gingerly. Hurt his hip when he fell from a great height: off the Manhattan phone directory he always sits on while playing (because he's short, see) . . . Via AP: Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton will appear with the Metropolitan Opera next summer in a performance of Arthur Honegger's "Joan of Arc at the Stake." . . . To which David Bennett appends: "In view of her acting ability, it is assumed that Miss Taylor will play the role of the stake." . . . Matthew Kelly

says Arlene Dahl married Winemobul Alexis Lichine after she called him and asked, "Well, is you or is you ain't?" To which Matthew replied "You know I ain't" . . . A rock'n'roll group called Sir Walter Raleigh and the Coupons just closed an engagement here, and what next?

ALL PLAYBOY Bunnies are stamped out of the same mold, and their pre-recorded conversation is built in at the factory . . . L. A. Writer Jim Murray, putting the blast on his own town in the current issues of Los Angeles magazine, describes it as "the city that nobody writes songs about." Hooray for Hollywood? . . . If you don't know your doctor's wife's first name, you could be in big trouble when an emergency strikes. Lots of doctors have their home phone numbers in their wives' names. . . . Among my relentless crusades that get nowhere is the one against the recorded telephone voice that says "The number you have reached is not in service at this time," and I still haven't reached it.

QUOTESVILLE: Mark Twain once said: "Three weeks at Lake Tahoe would restore an Egyptian mummy to his pristine vigor." It might even have been true of your old Jewish mummy, but that was a long ago. . . . Victor Hugo: "You should kneel while drinking Montrachet." Look at the price on the wine lists in our best restaurants, and you'll fall flat on your face. . . . The most loving dedication of the year must be the one in "The Art of

French Cooking," by Fernande Garvin: "To Jan, my husband, because there are no men like the ones his mother used to make" . . . Jack London: "A bone to the dog is not charity. Charity is a bone shared with the dog when you are just as hungry as the dog."

WHO NEEDS: The maddening squawking of the two-way radio in Yellow Cabs? At those prices, a respectful peace and silence should prevail. . . . Among the things that can't be improved are old-fashioned rubber stoppers for sinks; any other kind leaks eventually. . . . You know why beer commercials on TV (with a special nod to Hamm's) are so ingenious? Because under the existing regulations, the actual drinking of beer — or even the touching of glass to lips — is forbidden.

### Quote

State government is uniquely qualified to solve the problems of its own citizens. The federal government has a lamentable tendency to act as if it invented brains and has the only patent. — Jesse M. Unruh.

The young policeman on the streets has the most difficult job in the community. — James G. Fisk, L.A. police relations coordinator.

Where the people want to enjoy at least some degree of self-government, there is nothing more essential than an enlightened, active citizenry who vote intelligently. Dr. Von T. Ellsworth, San Francisco.

### ROYCE BRIER

## Draft Laws Should Not Stifle Free Expression

Last month some University of Michigan students staged a sit-in at their draft board, apparently on Viet Nam-war grounds. The draft board promptly reclassified them I-A in reprisal. Under the selective service draft law, draft boards are judges of classification, but the law does not authorize reclassification for other than violation of its provisions, such as willful failure to report for induction. Many protested the Ann Arbor board's action, including several Congressmen and university professors. It might be expected

Lewis B. Hershey, selective service director, would perceive the impropriety if not illegality of using the service obligation to punish those who oppose the law, but instead he upheld the Ann Arbor board. He said his administration did not propose to penalize those eligible who verbally oppose the law, but when an overt act such as a sit-in occurred, a draft board was justified in reclassification.

The obvious answer to Hershey was that overt resistance to enforcement of the selective service law is a violation of that law, or

special laws in force, and is punishable in the courts on complaint of the board, or other Federal agencies concerned.

But this answer did not alter Hershey's position. Back of it is a curious philosophy dealing with the obligations of those eligible to serve in the armed forces. This was that such service is not only an obligation, but a penalty to be visited on those whose behavior offends the draft authorities.

Now we have a view at variance with Hershey's, and it is likely to be controlling.

Fred M. Vinson Jr., assistant attorney general heading the criminal division of the Justice Department, wrote Senator Hart of Michigan that his department will not come to the aid of draft boards in the type of reclassification in question.

Vinson wrote: "As a matter of both law and policy, the sanctions of the military training and service act cannot be used to stifle constitutionally protected expression of views."

He said the draft law itself contained adequate provision for punishing those who would resist it. But: "This is not the case where the conduct involved is the expression of an opinion, even if the method of expression transgresses the law."

Mr. Vinson's pronouncement is not binding on Director Hershey or local draft boards, but he implied that in case a reclassified eligible challenges his status in the courts, except for direct violation of the draft law, the Justice Department will not aid the selective service system. The practical effect of this is to inhibit draft boards from enforcing reclassifications similar to the Michigan case.

It may be doubted if Congress or the people ever intended that the armed services shall be treated as a penal institution.